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**Item 7 of the provisional agenda**

**Task team on Africa**

**Possible Solutions to Some of the Challenges African  
Countries Have in Establishing Standardizing  
Authorities in their Respective Countries\***

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## **POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO SOME OF THE CHALLENGES AFRICAN COUNTRIES HAVE IN ESTABLISHING STANDARDIZING AUTHORITIES IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES**

### **Introduction**

There have been a number of initiatives in Africa to address the establishment of national standardizing authorities in all Africa countries to facilitate the standardization of geographical features and production of cartographic products in Africa. The lack of such products has resulted in poor air, water and land transportation infrastructure and systems, which eventually have a negative effect on the economic development of the continent. For example, some of delegates present here from African States have to fly to Europe or to other African states to attend this meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, since by road there are few routes from North Africa to sub-Saharan Africa (Egypt–Sudan, Algeria-Mali, Morocco-Mauritania, with a bridge to Spain as a future prospect), most ports around African Coasts need massive upgrades...

### **Background**

During the 22nd Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) held in New York, United States of America, in 2004, the Africa Task Group was established after Dr P E Raper (former Chairperson of the UNGEGN) reported on some of the challenges in the standardization of geographical names in sub-Saharan Africa. He gave background on some of the attempts the UNGEGN has made to establish national standardizing authorities in African states. He reported that in 1991 the UN Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa, held in Burkina Faso, identified the revitalization and coordination of geographical name activities in Africa as an issue of special concern. The UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) accordingly requested the UNGEGN to address the issue.

A special section of the Regional UN Cartographic Conference for Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 1992, was devoted to the standardization of geographical names. The Chairman and the Secretary of UNGEGN presented papers at that session and discussed possible solutions with Dr Peter Mwanza and Mr Orlando Nino, officers of the ECA. In pursuance of the discussion in Addis Ababa, the Africa South Division (Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe) of the UNGEGN was established.

This initiative resulted in most UN Regional Cartographic Conferences and International Cartographic Conferences devoting time within their activities to dealing with the standardization of geographical names. This has led to the establishment of the Africa Central Division (Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe), the Africa East Division (Botswana, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe), the Africa West Division (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo), and the Arabic Division (Algeria, Egypt, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia).

## **CHALLENGES OF COORDINATION**

Most of the UNGEGN Divisions that are grouped and established in terms of their geographical location have not yet functioned properly to fulfil the expectations of their mother body (UNGEgn). Lack of capacity (human and financial), political unrest, poor marketing of the benefits of standardization of geographical names within member countries and failure on our side to work with existing structures and projects that are already implemented in Africa are some of the reasons for this. There seems to be no synergy with organizations like the African Union, Southern African Development Community (SADEC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS), Economic Community of Central Africa States (ECCAS), Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), Intergovernmental Authority for Development of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD).

## **TRANSFRONTIER PARKS ESTABLISHMENT WITHIN SADC: RIDING ON THE WAVE**

Within the SADEC Region, we have seen the establishment of transfrontier parks to foster regional cooperation, biodiversity conservation, and cross-border socio-economic development, but most Africa South Division member countries did not see this as an opportunity to foster cooperation. We have seen implementing agencies, government departments and consultancies forced by circumstances to exceed their mandate of only delivering the project and ending up naming these new geographical features without taking consideration of UNGEGN resolutions on cross-border features.

### **1. Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Park (GLTP)**

There is the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Park GLTP, which is what used to be called Gaza-Kruger-Gonarezhou Transfrontier Park and includes part of Gaza Province in Mozambique, Kruger Park in South Africa and Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe.

On 9 December 2002, the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (GLTP) was proclaimed with the signing of an international treaty at Xai-Xai, Mozambique, by the heads of state of Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

### **2. /Ai-/Ais/Richtersveld Transfrontier Park (ARTP)**

As recently as 1 August 2003, a treaty on the establishment of the |Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld Transfrontier Park was signed in Windhoek by the presidents of Namibia and South Africa.

### **3. Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP)**

Along the Botswana and South Africa border, we have the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP), which was established by joining together the former Kalahari Gemsbok National Park on the South African side and Gemsbok National Park on the Botswana side.

The Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park is situated in the southern Kalahari, with 73% lying in Botswana and the remainder in South Africa. The area, which measures 37 256 km<sup>2</sup>, represents a large ecosystem relatively free of human interference – an increasingly rare phenomenon in Africa. The name Kgalagadi is derived from the San language and means "place of thirst", probably because of scarce water resources in the area and a source of hardship for hunters and gatherers.

On 7 April 1999, Botswana and South Africa signed a historic bilateral agreement whereby both countries undertook to manage their adjacent national parks, the Gemsbok National Park in Botswana and the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park in South Africa as a single ecological unit. The boundary between the two parks, which is also the international border between the two countries, had no physical barriers, thus allowing for the free movement of animals.

#### **4. Other Future Transfrontier Parks**

Other transfrontier parks that present an opportunity for cooperation with other Africa South Division countries are:

- (i) Ndumo-Tembe-Futi TFCA, which links the Maputo Elephant Reserve, through the Futi corridor, with the Ndumo Game Reserve and Tembe Elephant Park in South Africa.
- (ii) Ponto do Ouro-Kosi Bay Marine and Coastal TFCA, which links the Greater St Lucia Wetlands World Heritage Site with the coastline of Mozambique.
- (iii) Nsubane-Pongola TFCA, which encompasses the Jozini region in South Africa and the Lavumisa region in Swaziland.
- (iv) Lubombo Conservancy-Goba TFCA, which encompasses the Royal Hlane National Park and Mlawula Game Reserve in Swaziland and the Chingalane region in Mozambique.
- (v) Songimvelo Malolotja TFCA, which includes the Songimvelo Nature Reserve in South Africa and the Malolotja Nature Reserve in Swaziland.
- (vi) The Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Conservation and Development Project, which is a collaborative initiative between the governments of the Kingdom of Lesotho and the Republic of South Africa.
- (vii) The proposed Limpopo/Shashe Transfrontier Conservation Area (interim name only) straddles the international borders of Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe. When established, this transfrontier conservation area (TFCA) will embrace land that belongs to different stakeholders and become a unique conservation initiative involving partnerships between governments, private landowners and local communities.

The Limpopo/Shashe TFCA is situated at the confluence of the Limpopo and Shashe rivers. This area is rich in plant and animal life, scenic geological features and important archaeological sites, and therefore ideal for the establishment of a TFCA. The area includes the Mapungubwe Game Reserve, a world heritage site that recognises the ancient African city of Mapungubwe, a pre-colonial civilisation that has established evidence of trade links between Africans, Europeans, Chinese, and the other Asians more than a millennium ago.

Agreements to develop further transfrontier conservation areas in southern Africa are under way, with some in the final stages of development.

The establishment of transfrontier conservation areas is an exemplary process of partnerships between governments and the private sector. While the main players are the relevant governments and implementing agencies, donors and NGOs have also greatly contributed towards the creation of transfrontier parks. In the case of the GLTP, entities such as the World Bank, USAID Regional Center for Southern Africa, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development through Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, WWF Netherlands, Novamedia, the Rufford Maurice Laing Foundation, the Dutch National Postcode Lottery, Deutsche Bank, SAFRI/DaimlerChrysler, the African Wildlife Foundation, and the Peace Parks Foundation have made major contributions towards creating what may be considered the world's greatest animal kingdom.

## **CONCLUSION**

We can use contacts emanating from cooperation during these projects to facilitate the establishment of naming authorities in these countries and therefore the functioning of Africa South Division and other Divisions in Africa.

We should approach the implementing government departments and implementing agencies of these projects to form part of their technical committees. UNGEGN should be urged to organize the All-Africa Group of Experts on Geographical Names under the auspices of the African Union (AU) to kick-start the Africa Division with all her divisions as already demarcated.

We will encourage and allow SAGNC meetings to be attended by ASD or any other Division member countries as observers.

Through the UN, the UNGEGN should establish cooperation with the African Union (AU) to provide for representation of UNGEGN Divisions in all AU committees that deal with economic and social development.

Thank You